Writers and artists are a faithful lot. We keep on doing our work and assume there will be paper to print it on and money to pay us for our labor. When there isn't any of either, we do it ourselves. We all have different reasons. Ego? Well, would you call it vanity for a gardener to want to harvest the crops he had sewn and see his friends enjoy the fruits of his labor? I think most of the cartoonists feel the same way. The process is incomplete until the printed book is on the stands. Takes a long time to draw a comic book and when an artist is finished it is a bummer for him to have to wait a year or more to see it in print. That, more than the money, was what made Kim Deitch publish CORNFED 1 himself when he returned to San Francisco from Oregon early in 1972. It was Kim's precedent along with Bill Griffith's impatience that stimulated the founding of the first Cartoonists Co-op Press in the Fall of 1973. Bill thought in terms of four artists because of the way comix are printed. Four covers appear on one sheet, and it is cheapper to get four books printed at one time than to do them singly. Jay Lynch joined with his NARD 'N' PAT and Fresno artist Jerry Lane came along with his MIDDLE CLASS FANTASIES. The Co-op was underway, but the work had only begun. It was left to Bill and Kim to do most of the negatives and the stripping as well as all of the dozens of errands, because Lane and Lynch were not in town. CORNFED 2 and FANTASIES were ready by 1 December and the big problem had arrived. Distribution. Bad fortune struck in the form of a biker who broke Keith Green's arm with a tire chain the very week he was due to distribute the books for the Co-op. Local comix companies will probably take some of the books for their inventories to fill mail orders, but there are 10,000 of each, and anyone interested in carrying them is asked to contact the Co-op through their P. O. Box. The Co-op is interested in talking to other artists about their trip, so if you have a book ready to publish and sufficient backing for your book, check them out. Their goal is to keep the ugs alive in a time when they are threatened with extinction and to help other artists become self-sufficient so the number of middlemen in the business may be reduced.

A YEAR PASSES LIKE NOTHING with the FABULOUS FURRY FREAK BROS. Gilbert Shelton has returned from Austin with the final pages for the third FREAKS anthology. This one has the pages which have been run in a number of underground papers around the U. S. through Shelton's own syndicate. Problem there is most of those papers are broke and have burned him for his art. Did you like that pink edition of FREAKS 2? You collectors, take note: That was the first pink underground in history so get out there and buy a few dozen for your trunks. I'm waiting for someone to get it together to do one on the sporting green.. . . Jaxon's still doing those Conan paintings. Beautiful work. His "Death Rattle" story is the lead in GRIM WIT 2, Corben's fantasy title and you'll find color and art by Richard in VAMPIRELLA 30, a tale called "As Though They Were Living." Isn't the monster fad ever going to end? And, Yes, Ken, Rich Corben's FANTAGOR was a fanzine. He did a thousand or so of the first one and got bummed out on mail orders so he sold the rights to Last-Gasp and the book was done in comic form in 1971. For copies of the original fanzine, check with Bob Sidebottom, 73 East San Fernando, San Jose, Ca., or try John Barrett at the Berkeley Comic Art Shop, 2512 Telegraph, Berkeley, Ca. . . . BOOKS IN RUMOR. GIRL FIGHT 2 by Trina, WIMMEN'S 3 by editor Sharon Rudahl & many others, ARMAGEDDON 3 by Barney Steel, and Ted Richards' DOPIN' DAN 3. . . . If you're not seeing much comic news in the papers, it's because the print shortage has cut down on the space. Comic reviews have a low priority. Both L. A. WEEKLY NEWS and STAR may fold (may have folded already) & that's going to be hard on some cartoonists. Jim Himes has been serializing his new book, SEX, in STAR. Says Jim: "I have grown in an environment that tied sex to stress & guilt. . . . In STAR I have tried to create an idealistic world at the opposite extreme: a world where sexual encounters are either stress free, or the stress is relieved by warm, honest guidance." Jim is seeking a backer for his guiltless SEX book. I suggest a talk with the Co-op when the work is completed. At Intersection (756 Union in North Beach in January, Clay Geerdes will be showing slides of The Cockettes and of forties Golden Age comics. Call for dates, times.

JANUARY '74

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New work by PUDGE artist Lee Marrs will appear in PLOP! (3 stories), CRAZY, and VENUS (formerly CALIFORNIA GIRLS, the local slick which grew out of rapper Don Chamberlain's KNEW radio show). . . Jay Lynch says COQ will continue for awhile, but without him. He left when senior editors refused him control over the cartoons to be used in the mag as per their previous agreement. Without final say, he said, he couldn't run his department efficiently. On the current situation: "Paper shortage & Supreme Court Decision aside--Comix reached their sales peak in 71-72 & now we can anticipate only selling 1/3 of what we sold in peak times. The big companies are geared toward expansion & there won't be any expansion. . . . companies like Cartoonists Co-op Press are the future of the comix business--low overhead & less middlemen & 1/3 of peak profits look pretty good." On the readership: "The audience is older post-war babies are what constituted the original comix audience & should be the ones who comix reach today--but new comix appeal to kids who are younger. Post-war babies are the Nation's single largest age group. Today's teens can't support shit in the marketplace. There just ain't enuff of 'em." Colleges: "Kids are different. Fraternity and sorority initiation is up. PENTHOUSE has replaced BARB & EVO. Kids look at Abbie Hoffman with the same hate and distrust they felt for Lyndon Johnson 5 years ago." Jay is doing spot cartoons in the "rushes" section of GALLERY, where Skip Williamson is cartoon editor. A story written by Jane Lynch & himself is in the current PSYCHO. . . . Too bad about CRAZY. As an imitation of MAD, it can never be more than second best. The book might have been an excellent market for underground artists, but, as it stands, most of it is likely to be done by Marvel's house artists. One would think the incredible success of NATIONAL LAMPOON would have told Stan Lee something, but he seems to be tuning out what is going on in the country right now.. . . DC may phase out all 20¢ comics. The paper shortage has hit Sparta, Ill. where most of the color covers are printed. . . . You West Coast women writers & artists who have been trying to deal with Ms. by mail--a friend tells me all copy & art that goes into the mag has to be okayed by the entire collective. Means about 20 women have to give you the nod before you get in. . . . ACLU lawyers are defending Gordon & Evelyn Wilson, owners of FARENHEIT 451, a Laguna Beach bookstore busted for selling ZAP & TITS & CLITS.

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BULLPEN WEST. In the East, cartoonist get together the first Friday of each month to talk about the biz. A lot of the younger writers are now living in Bay Area. Artists interested in getting together, write Mike Freidrich C/O Comix World/915 Indian Rock/Berk.

IT SURE DID. BUT IT PUT SOME FUNNY NOTIONS IN HIS HEAD, TOO.
SUCH AS?
WELL, YOU BE THE JUDGE. THIS MORNING I SAW HIM WRITING LOVE LETTERS TO THE MUNICIPAL GAS AN' ELECTRIC!
OOOO...
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ME BIG CHEF

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